



**Arlington Historic District Commissions  
Final and Approved Minutes  
June 25, 2020  
8:00 PM  
Conducted by Remote Participation**

**Commissioners Present:** C. Barry, M. Bush, B. Cohen, A. Frank Johnson, S. Makowka, B. Melofchik, C. Tee

**Commissioners Not Present:** N. Aikenhead, M. Audin, D. Baldwin, J. Worden

**Guests:** M. Crewe, M. Smith, L. Leahy, C. Rowell, J. Gettler, Z. Dutton, C. Chebot

- 1. AHDC Meeting Opens 8:00pm**
- 2. Approval of draft minutes from May 28, 2020 and June 11, 2020. B. Cohen moved approval – C. Tee seconded. Roll Call – B Cohen, C. Barry, B. Melofchik, Alison, M. Bush Unanimous approval to accept the minutes from both months.**
- 3. Communications**
- 4. New Business**
  - a. Formal Hearing for 106 Westminster Ave. (Chebot) for installation of a new fence [Hearing will be limited to 20 minutes]**

The Applicant explained they want a small fence around the yard. Had installed posts before realizing they needed to file an application. Stopped working and here they are – want fence because they live on a steep hill and only the fenced area is the only flat section for them to have a play area. The fence will be 30” in height, framed with flowers. Left side of home has a high retaining wall (7’) in yard and they want to block that so no one falls over the wall. Open to discussion of what it should look like – he looked at the AHDC website and knows no vinyl. They modeled their application after neighborhood fences already erected. S. Makowka asked if posts shown in the photos are 30””? The Applicant responded that they are quite a bit taller now but will be cut down to the correct height for the 30” fence once done. The Commission asked about gates – how do you get into side yard? Pg 8 diagram – planned gate is on short little run that hooks toward the house. S. Makowka pointed out that gate next to stoop is not traditional and might not be very functional, should review final plans with monitor. M. Bush moved approval of application, seconded for discussion by B. Cohen. After discussion, M. Bush amended motion to include that the final details including the gate are subject to monitor approval prior to installation. Amended motion seconded by B. Cohen. Roll Call Vote: C. Barry - Yes, M. Bush - Yes, B. Cohen - Yes, A. Frank Johnson - Yes, S. Makowka- Yes, B. Melofchik - Yes, C. Tee – Yes. Unanimous approval. Monitor appointed: A. Frank Johnson

**b. Continuation of Formal Hearing for 53 Westmoreland Ave. for enclosure of rear porch [Hearing will be limited to 50 minutes]**

Applicant Lori Leahy gave presentation. Question about whether this was a really a continuation of the earlier hearing. M. Bush suggested and the Applicant agreed to this should be treated essentially as a new application since the presentation is so different that the prior discussion does not provide any meaningful context. S. Makowka noted that we this as a new application denovo and asked the Applicant to give the overview of the full project to all the Commissioners. S. Makowka also announced that the meeting will be recorded according to the adopted AHDC protocols and that he was starting the recording now (8:34pm).

The Applicant referred to a picture of rear of house. The plan is to remove 2<sup>nd</sup> story porch and rebuild the bottom porch, closing it in to make it a mudroom. The closed in portion will have a door with a 6' deck and staircase going into the back yard. So, enclose the porch and add a deck off the back of that – just a small stairs, to get out of the enclosed porch. On the existing, non-original addition (figure 6), rubber roof exists, but it is unsightly and seen from Crescent Hill Ave and from the inside see an unsightly roof. The plan is to enclose the lower back porch, remove the 2<sup>nd</sup> story porch, and continue the roofline down from peak of the addition and put a metal roof on it. They believe the shallow pitch will only allow for a metal or rubber roof. They prefer the metal roof not a rubber one. The porch deck, and railing stairs and anything underneath will exactly match the detailing on the front porch as seen on page 8. The trim for side of the proposed awning and porch railings will match details shown on pg. 9 (but not the railings down stairs which are not historical). The posts are original.

Historic review document shown next – they did it themselves and followed documents M Bush had shared and tried to give info the Commission requested. The bottom porch is being filled in and they are making it a mudroom. Page A9.2 shows the existing addition to right and then the porch, 1<sup>st</sup> story porch closed in with landing, railings and set of stairs. There are three options for the awning over the door presented – this is option 1. M. Bush said start with A6.1 – this is 1 configuration – an awning over door about a foot below roofline, A6.2 shows alternate version with awning in line of primary roof; A6.3 is a different version of awning roof.

A7.1 is side view of shed style awning, A7.2 is in line with the roof option and A7.3 is the sort of awning option that is closer to the dorm. A7.2 is just a shelter over the door. These are 3 different variations over the door – about 2 feet deep – enough to not get wet getting in the door. B. Cohen suggested something beefier but the Applicant said that the Commission discouraged that approach before. B. Cohen wondered if it might make sense to extend the roofline out -- half roof attached and then slopes off A9.2 – just extend roof out 3 feet. Applicant indicated they are fine with that since that would turn it into an open porch. M. Bush said looking at plan A6.2, you would need posts at corners and match the front porch decoratively. A9.2 would add in posts. Lattice underneath to match the front porch.

S. Makowka is concerned about the slope of the proposed black metal roof. C. Barry asked if the offset (asymmetrical) low sloped mass is unusual for the neighborhood? L. Leahy said she found lots of historical documents showing a saltbox roofline which is typical to New England. C Barry said it seems very uncharacteristic. B. Cohen said she agrees but stated that it is an existing condition. The other Commissioners corrected her understanding, clarifying that the existing addition roof is symmetrical and that the proposal would change the slope of the roof on the left side (when viewed

from the rear.) M. Bush said sheet A5 shows where the existing pitch ends up. M. Bush said you are doubling the run but keeping the same rise which creates an asymmetrical addition on the back which brings back the saltbox look. S. Makowka said at A5 if you left pitch where it is and put standing seam on existing addition, you could keep the proposed mudroom as a flat roof tucked in behind. Applicant wants to avoid the rubber roof.

S. Makowka stated that if the rubber was on the flat roof, it disappears and you have trim around the edge. He suggested that would keep the symmetry on the existing addition. C. Barry agreed that would be a preferred approach – there are lots of historical examples of flat roofs over additions. B. Cohen said right thing to do would be to build up the other slope on the addition by moving the peak up and over to the middle between two windows on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The Applicant stated that they can't afford to move the ridge line and that the existing windows would be affected. M. Bush confirmed that moving the ridge would impact windows. B. Melofchik said they are dealing with a house with an existing condition that already exists so what is the Commissions feeling attitude about making a change that's impacted by that condition? S. Makowka reiterated that they were being asked to consider doing a flat roof over the mudroom to keep symmetry of the existing addition. We can add this to the 7/9 meeting and continue to that date – applicant agreed to come back on 7/9. Regarding the proposed flat roof, B. Cohen said if you extend porch roof out with trim to match the front case, then she's good.

### **10 Minute Break – no business to be conducted**

#### **c. Formal Hearing for 256 Pleasant Street (Smith) for window changes [Hearing will be limited to 20 minutes]**

Applicant M. Smith gave presentation. She has been at address for over 30 years. The house has been in the family since built in 1960s. It is a mid-century modern house and they have retained everything original to house but with the backside being so exposed to the pond, they have had a lot of wood rot. Most recently the windows were impacted. She thought she didn't need to go before us for the windows. The windows were already made and she has \$12,000 worth of windows that aren't generally approved by the HDC. Goal is to get windows in – can no longer see from the backyard or Rt 2 because of tree growth.

B. Cohen corrected that the rear is viewable from a public way, albeit at quite a distance and obscured seasonally by vegetation. S. Makowka clarified that the only proposed change is on back of house – up high above the pond and confirmed that there is lots of vegetation and, while it is visible, it is only from a distance from the Rt. 2 path and the pond. The applicant clarified that only the windows highlighted in yellow are being changed. The current (original mid-century) windows are wood. A. Frank Johnson asked if we can be more flexible to a house built in the 1960s. B. Cohen said the house is historical and another mid- century modern on Pleasant street is being done. It was pointed out that the picture might make it seem like the windows are front and center, however, the perspective is from the property while the actual public view is at a much greater distance. The proposal is to use vinyl windows and not clad. Goal is to keep full existing size of the windows while maintaining the existing awning window style. S. Makowka suggested that the Commission could

differentiate this due to the mitigating circumstances – it is really at a distance which is the only reason they would allow this change to happen. It's also the top floor of the house. C. Barry agrees with the mitigating factor being distance and as long as proportions are kept it would be reasonable to accept. M. Bush said in January 2017 we approved vinyl on lower story of 190-192 Westminster which are kind of visible from road with minimal visibility and were approved given the circumstances – this is a similar situation. M. Crewe owns 253 Pleasant St., directly across and she supports her getting these windows and she does walk the path and it is quite a distance and she feels nobody is going to notice. She supports the HDC to approve these windows under this situation.

C. Barry moves that the HDC accept the proposed replacement of windows as submitted with understanding that the proportions and openings are same and the trim around the windows will be wood and will be painted to blend in as much as possible. – seconded by A. Frank Johnson. The Commission notes that this is a circumstance unique to this house and it is barely visible. Roll Call – B. Cohen - Yes, C. Tee - Yes, C. Barry - Yes, B. Melofchik - Yes, A. Frank Johnson - Yes, S. Makowka - Yes, M. Bush – Yes. Unanimous approval – M. Bush appointed monitor.

**d. Formal Hearing for 187 Lowell Street (Grinnell) for new construction [Hearing will be limited to 50 minutes]**

S. Makowka explained that this is the first formal hearing on this application and the AHC guidelines have a very detailed 3 step procedure for considering new additions in a District. 1) is it appropriate to build anything on site 2) approve size and massing 3) approve details. Noted that in 1<sup>st</sup> phase of hearing consideration of step 1 shall be continued to 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing date. Hearing from applicant, getting questions from commissioners, opening to public comment and continued to next meeting. Tonight focusing is it appropriate to put something on this location solely. Justification why project is appropriate in the District.

C. Grinnell to give presentation for new construction in Historic District. The property was developed and had extensive review by HDC leading up to some 2009 approvals. Houses approved for lots of either side of existing 187 – new construction and a large addition for his house at 187. That whole plan was modified in 2011 when changes at that time were to build house only on 1 vacant lot (being what is now 191). All other plans' approvals were rescinded so we are really starting fresh today. Lots of insight found from the prior submissions. Application has a lot of info about site. He and wife are historic home enthusiasts and they find and restore historic homes as a passion. Hope is honestly people look at new home and have to look very carefully to find that it isn't an original antique. Has already bought decorative woodwork on Ebay that are originals to use in the project. Package tonight is exactly the same as the one sent on 6/22. Starting on the overview of site – lots of detail of what trying to do with house and how it would fit into the neighborhood with respect to 187 Lowell Street. Original house on well landscaped lot with existence of long time – unique in Mt Gilboa area. Original idea was very grand house lots and due to different economic times some of that development changed mid process. Example of earlier development which is different from other properties in the District. B. Cohen said what was unique was that prior owners – their families owned house since it had been built. Probably only place in Arlington that has retained that look and feel so when going through process of getting to present state that was a major consideration. Pushing the houses back on lot was necessary to retain that semi-rural look. In photos there was context of

neighboring houses directly around 187 and what will be directly impacted. Houses shown on same side of street labeled 1-5 on map. Drawing of homes presented (pg 18) – pg. 19 discussed to show context of top down plan. Existing contour lines shown. S. Makowka said idea of owner of original lot was keep original house and another structure that looks like a barn or accessory structure that was converted. At end of day, approved barn structure to be built to right, but with approval of the Commission, a subsequent asked that that structure be moved to left (now 191 Lowell). In the plan, the structure to the right has a lot less space. Well terraced with surrounding yards and expanse at front with focus on 187 needs to be maintained. Full package from back then would be great to give the Commissioners. What was approved for this lot is built at 191 – it exists. In 2009 the HDC approved the building currently sited at 191 for this lot and that was before applicant bought property. Applicant did rely a lot that 191 was approved. 191 was originally proposed for lot that is proposed to have a new build. S. Makowka said the elevation makes it look like more imposing since stepback is lots and that the Commission has found a 3-D model helpful to show relationship of size and massing. Applicant said his drawings should achieve same goal. Meeting continued to 7/9.

- e. Formal Hearing for 40 Irving Street (Green) for replacement stone wall and various other regrading projects [Deferred by Commission to new scheduled meeting on Thursday July 9]**
- f. Formal Hearing for 39 Russell Street (Donegan) for pool and fence install S. Makowk stated that CONA was issued for backyard, at-grade pool and fence was deferred by Commission to new scheduled meeting on Thursday July 9 subject to monitor determination if CONA was also appropriate base on final plans.**

## **5. Old Business**

- a. Avon Place and Central Street Historic District vacant commissioner seats - No discussion.**
- b. Report from Streetscape sub-committee - No discussion.**
- c. Modification of Design Guidelines for Fiberglass Gutter eligibility for a CONA;** Application from 105 Pleasant Street for Fiberglass Gutters received. Hearing required or can we do a CONA? M. Bush moved for 10 day approval, B. Cohen seconded – Roll Call - unanimous approval. M. Bush moved 10 day approval of fiberglass gutters. Roll Call vote – unanimous approval.
- d. C. Barry will continue to revue applications for 7/9 meeting**

## **6. Review of projects – - No discussion**

## **7. Meeting Adjourns** Meeting adjourned at 10:25pm

Next Meeting 7-9-2020 – C. Barry to continue review of projects